Kol Rina
*An Independent Minyan*
Parashat Metzorah – Shabbat HaGadol
April 20, 2024 *** Nisan 12, 5784

## Metzorah in a Nutshell

https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/1761/jewish/Metzora-in-a-Nutshell.htm

The name of the Parshah, "Metzora," is often translated as "leper" and it is found in Leviticus 14:2.

Last week's Parshah described the signs of the metzora (commonly mistranslated as "leper")—a person afflicted by a spiritual malady which places him or her in a state of ritual impurity. This week's Torah reading begins by detailing how the recovered metzora is purified by the kohen (priest) with a special procedure involving two birds, spring water in an earthen vessel, a piece of cedar wood, a scarlet thread and a bundle of hyssop.

A home can also be afflicted with tzaraat by the appearance of dark red or green patches on its walls. In a process lasting as long as nineteen days, a kohen determines if the house can be purified, or whether it must be demolished.

Ritual impurity is also engendered through a seminal or other discharge in a man, and menstruation or other discharge of blood in a woman, necessitating purification through immersion in a mikvah.

## Shabbat Hagadol

https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1692/jewish/Shabbat-Hagadol.htm

### What is Shabbat Hagadol

The Shabbat which precedes Passover is called Shabbat haGadol, the Great Sabbath, for many and varied reasons, as we shall explain below.

There are also many special customs associated with this Shabbat. It was in Egypt that Israel celebrated the very first Shabbat Ha-Gadol on the tenth of Nissan, five days before their redemption. On that day, the Children of Israel were given their first commandment which applied only to that Shabbat, but not to future generations: On the tenth day of this month [Nissan]... each man should take a lamb for the household, a lamb for each home (Exodus 12:3).

This mitzvah of preparing a lamb for the Passover offering four days before it was to be brought, applied only to that first Passover in Egypt, and the Torah does not

tell us that we must continue to do so before every future Passover. Nevertheless, the people continued to do this to make sure that their lambs had no blemishes which would preclude their being sacrificed.

Many miracles were performed for the Children of Israel on this first Shabbat haGadol. The Torah commanded them to take their lambs and tie them to the bedpost. When they did so, their Egyptian neighbors saw this and asked:

"What is the lamb for?"

The Children of Israel answered: "It is to be slaughtered as a Passover sacrifice as G-d has commanded us."

The Egyptians, for whom the lamb was a deity, gnashed their teeth in anger but could not utter a sound in protest.

Many other miracles as well were performed in connection with the Passover offering, we therefore refer to this day as Shabbat haGadol.

## Why We Celebrate Shabbat Hagadol instead of the 10th of Nissan

Why do we commemorate the miracle on the Shabbat before Passover rather than on the tenth of Nissan, the date on which it actually took place? We see that the Torah itself mentions only the date rather than the day of the week.

It is because the miracle is closely connected to Shabbat. The Egyptians were aware that the Children of Israel observed Shabbat and did not busy themselves tending animals on that day, so when the Egyptians saw them taking lambs and binding them to their bedposts on Shabbat, they were surprised and decided to investigate what was happening.

The Children of Israel were in great danger when they were confronted and were saved only by virtue of a miracle. We therefore commemorate this miracle on Shabbat rather than on the tenth of the month of Nissan.

Moreover, had it not been Shabbat, the Children of Israel would not have needed a miracle to save them. They would have been able to deceive the Egyptians by diverting their attention or making up some kind of explanation. On Shabbat, however, they would not do so, for, as our Sages said, "Even an ignorant man will not tell lies on Shabbat." Thus, we see that they were endangered because of their observance of Shabbat, and they needed a miracle to save them.

A further reason why we recall the miracle on Shabbat rather than on the tenth of the month is that, forty years later, Miriam died on that day and the well which accompanied the Children of Israel and provided them with water in the wilderness, disappeared. When the anniversary of Miriam's death falls on a

weekday, some observe it as a fast for the righteous.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### Is there such a thing as Lashon Tov?:Metzorah (5771) by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/metzora/is-there-such-a-thing-as-lashon-tov/

The Sages understood tsara'at, the theme of this week's parsha, not as an illness but as a miraculous public exposure of the sin of lashon hara, speaking badly about people. Judaism is a sustained meditation on the power of words to heal or harm, mend or destroy. Just as God created the world with words, He empowered us to create, and destroy, relationships with words.

The rabbis said much about lashon hara, but virtually nothing about the corollary, lashon tov, "good speech". The phrase does not appear in either the Babylonian Talmud or the Talmud Yerushalmi. It figures only in two midrashic passages (where it refers to praising God). But lashon hara does not mean speaking badly about God. It means speaking badly about human beings. If it is a sin to speak badly about people, is it a mitzvah to speak well about them? My argument will be that it is, and to show this, let us take a journey through the sources.

In Mishnah Avot we read the following:

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai had five (pre-eminent) disciples, namely Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, Rabbi Joshua ben Chananya, Rabbi Yose the Priest, Rabbi Shimon ben Netanel, and Rabbi Elazar ben Arach.

He used to recount their praise: Eliezer ben Hyrcanus: a plastered well that never loses a drop. Joshua ben Chananya: happy the one who gave him birth. Yose the Priest: a pious man. Shimon ben Netanel: a man who fears sin. Elazar ben Arach: an ever-flowing spring. Ethics of the Fathers 2:10-11

However, the practice of Rabban Yochanan in praising his disciples seems to stand in contradiction to a Talmudic principle:

Rav Dimi, brother of Rav Safra said: Let no one ever talk in praise of his neighbour, for praise will lead to criticism. Arachin 16a

Rashi gives two explanations of this statement. Having delivered excessive praise [yoter midai], the speaker himself will come to qualify his remarks, admitting for the sake of balance that the person of whom he speaks also has faults. Alternatively, others will point out his faults in response to the praise. For Rashi, the crucial consideration is, is the praise judicious, accurate, true, or it is

overstated? If the former, it is permitted; if the latter, it is forbidden. Evidently Rabban Yochanan was careful not to exaggerate.

Rambam, however, sees matters differently. He writes: "Whoever speaks well about his neighbour in the presence of his enemies is guilty of a secondary form of evil speech [avak lashon hara], since he will provoke them to speak badly about him" (Hilchot Deot 7:4). According to the Rambam the issue is not whether the praise is moderate or excessive, but the context in which it is delivered. If it is done in the presence of friends of the person about whom you are speaking, it is permitted. It is forbidden only when you are among his enemies and detractors. Praise then becomes a provocation, with bad consequences.

Are these merely two opinions, or is there something deeper at stake? There is a famous passage in the Talmud which discusses how one should sing the praises of a bride at her wedding:

Our Rabbis taught: How should you dance before the bride [i.e. what should one sing]?

The disciples of Hillel hold that at a wedding you should sing that the bride is beautiful, whether she is or not. Shammai's disciples disagree. Whatever the occasion, don't tell a lie. "Do you call that a lie?" the Hillel's disciples respond. "In the eyes of the groom at least, the bride is beautiful."

What's really at stake here is not just temperament – puritanical Shammaites versus good-natured Hillelites – but two views about the nature of language. The Shammaites think of language as a way of making statements, which are either true or false. The Hillelites understand that language is about more than making statements. We can use language to encourage, empathise, motivate, and inspire. Or we can use it to discourage, disparage, criticise, and depress. Language does more than convey information. It conveys emotion. It creates or disrupts a mood. The sensitive use of speech involves social and emotional intelligence. Language, in J. L. Austin's famous account, can be performative as well as informative.[1]

The discourse between the disciples of Hillel and Shammai is similar to the argument between Rambam and Rashi. For Rashi, as for Shammai, the key question about praise is: is it true, or is it excessive? For Rambam as for Hillel, the question is: what is the context? Is it being said among enemies or friends? Will it create warmth and esteem or envy and resentment?

We can go one further, for the disagreement between Rashi and Rambam about praise may be related to a more fundamental disagreement about the nature of the command, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). Rashi

interprets the command to mean: do not do to your neighbour what you would not wish him to do to you (Rashi to Sanhedrin 84b). Rambam, however, says that the command includes the duty "to speak in his praise" (Hilchot Deot 6:3). Rashi evidently sees praise of one's neighbour as optional, while Rambam sees it as falling within the command of love.

We can now answer a question we should have asked at the outset about the Mishnah in Avot that speaks of Yochanan ben Zakkai's disciples. Avot is about ethics, not about history or biography. Why then does it tell us that Rabban Yochanan had disciples? That, surely, is a fact not a value, a piece of information not a guide to how to live.

However, we can now see that the Mishnah is telling us something profound indeed. The very first statement in Avot includes the principle: "Raise up many disciples." But how do you create disciples? How do you inspire people to become what they could become, to reach the full measure of their potential? Answer: By acting as did Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai when he praised his students, showing them their specific strengths.

He did not flatter them. He guided them to see their distinctive talents. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, the "well that never loses a drop", was not creative but he had a remarkable memory – not unimportant in the days before the Oral Torah was written in books. Elazar ben Arach, the "ever-flowing spring," was creative, but needed to be fed by mountain waters (years later he separated from his colleagues and it is said that he forgot all he had learned).

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai took a Hillel-Rambam view of praise. He used it not so much to describe as to motivate. And that is lashon tov. Evil speech diminishes us, good speech helps us grow. Evil speech puts people down, good speech lifts them up. Focused, targeted praise, informed by considered judgment of individual strengths, and sustained by faith in people and their potentiality, is what makes teachers great and their disciples greater than they would otherwise have been. That is what we learn from Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai.

So there is such a thing as lashon tov. According to Rambam it falls within the command of "Love your neighbour as yourself." According to Avot it is one way of "raising up many disciples." It is as creative as lashon hara is destructive.

Seeing the good in people and telling them so is a way of helping it become real, becoming a midwife to their personal growth. If so, then not only must we praise God. We must praise people too. [1] See J. L. Austin's How to Do Things with Words, Harvard University Press, 1962.

# Pesach: Cleanse the Spiritual Chametz this Pesach by Rabbi Alicia Harris

https://truah.org/resources/alicia-harris-pesach-moraltorah_2024_/

My favorite part of Passover preparation is *bedikat chametz*, the search for the final bits of leavened products the night before the first seder. Growing up, we would go to my Bubbie and Zaydie's home for the holiday, and I loved that quiet evening ritual. I relished the calm before the house filled with every relative, friend, and stranger we could fit. They would turn all the lights off and we searched by candlelight with a feather duster for the last pieces of bread they put out for us to find. The next morning, we would burn those last crumbs in the driveway, acknowledging that, to the very best of our (well, my Bubbie's) ability, we had rid the house of chametz and would be free of it for the duration of the holiday.

Centuries of rabbinic scholarship — from the Talmud, Rambam, and Kad HaKemach (a book of Mussar) to contemporary scholars like Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg — have contended that chametz is not only physical but also spiritual. It represents inflation of ego, things we wish we had done differently, and the ways we have abandoned humility over the last year.

Six months after October 7, many of us are struggling with how to approach a celebration of our liberation while our Israeli and Palestinian siblings are still in their own *Mitzrayim*, their own narrow place. This year, something else begs to be added to that list of spiritual chametz: our inability to see the humanity in others, especially people with whom we disagree.

Disagreement is fundamental to Judaism. Our laws do not come to us in the form of lists alone but as arguments between rabbis who are working — and arguing — their way through our holiest text. They debate but never degrade each other. They disagree about the truth of Torah and how it should be practiced, but they never accuse their colleagues of being bad Jews or suggest they don't belong in the community.

We have become conditioned that there is only one answer to what's happening in Israel and are quick to label someone a "good" or "bad" Jew if they disagree with us. This is a dangerous label, one that alienates us from our fellow Jews. It's also antithetical to who we are as a people — people who value debate, argument, and ambiguity.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with leaders from Standing Together, a grassroots movement mobilizing Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel in pursuit of peace, equality, and social and climate justice.

When asked how they work toward liberation with people with fundamental disagreements, the Standing Together leaders asked us to leave our own

definitions at the door. They asked us to release the need to be right, to win the argument, and to instead focus on what we share: our desire for freedom, safety, and justice — for peace — for all people.

That is the work before us this Pesach. We must abandon our worship of the false idol of correctness. We must cleanse our homes and our hearts of the chametz of "being right." We have to be willing to set aside all of the things that inflate our egos in this conversation — terminology and accusations, preexisting beliefs about the solution to this conflict, and other things that "leaven" our arguments. Instead, as the Standing Together leaders taught us, we have to start with what we know.

So today, what do we know? We know it is not okay for innocent people to be killed. We know the hostages should be returned. We know that all people need peace to survive. We know the liberation of Israelis is bound up with the liberation of Palestinians and vice versa. We know being traumatized is not a way to live. We also know that clinging to the crumbs of winning an argument or having the correct answer at the cost of irreparable relationships only takes us further away from peace.

And we know, from *bedikat chametz*, that it's not enough to simply get rid of that chametz — we have to burn it beyond recognition. The ritual ends by destroying the chametz down to the root, and only then do we consider ourselves truly ready for Passover. We can't leave the narrow places in our lives if we're holding on to anger or limiting beliefs. This year, more than any other Pesach in recent memory, we must inspect every crevice with a bright candle. We are called to do the hard and deeply Jewish work of eradicating every crumb of chametz, every impulse that tells us it's more important to be right than it is to see each other for having been created *b'tzelem Elohim* — in the image of the Divine. Only then can we walk together out of *Mitzrayim* and toward the Promised Land. Only then will we find the path toward freedom and peace. (*Rabbi Alicia Harris is the spiritual leader of Congregation Shir Tikvah in Troy, MI, a Reform/Renewal congregation in metro Detroit where she began serving in 2020 after her ordination from Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.)*

## In Each and Every Generation: Pesach by Burton L. Visotzky
https://www.jtsa.edu/torah/in-each-and-every-generation/

Twice in the Passover liturgy we hear the phrase, "in each and every generation." We are taught that "in each and every generation a person is obligated to see himself as though he had participated in the Exodus from Egypt." On the other hand, we are reminded that "in each and every generation they arise against us to destroy us." The consolation is that The Holy, blessed be God, presumably saves us from their hands.

This is a d'var Torah of despair and hope. I want so much to see myself as though I had left Egypt, or at least Gaza. I yearn for this, as I am horrified at the wanton destruction we are wreaking on the innocent Palestinians in Gaza. It recalls the Midrash in which God rebukes the angels for rejoicing as the Egyptians of yore were buried by the Sea. "My creatures are drowning, and you wish to sing!?!"

And I want so much to see our hostages return safely home from their captivity, their all too literal enslavement there. For this is a d'var Torah about my young cousin Hersh, who on October 7, six months ago, was viciously attacked by utterly evil terrorists as he celebrated his 23rd birthday at the Supernova Music festival. They blew off part of his arm, put him in a truck, and took him captive into Gaza. We pray he is still alive. We pray that he will return home.

But we know that Hersh and his fellow captives and their families will never be the same. The damage has been done in so many insidious ways, whether the loss of an arm, or the loss of innocence of so many young women now enslaved, or the loss of naivete of a generation of carefree Jews, or the loss of a (false) sense of invincibility for the entirety of Israel and the Diaspora.

I know enough about Jewish history to give credence to the Haggadah's dour view, "in each and every generation they rise against us." I even know that God has not, necessarily, saved us from their evil hands. The litany of destruction that began with Egyptian enslavement and has come full circle to Gazan captivity is a reification of what the late historian Salo Baron decried as "the lachrymose theory of Jewish history." He insisted that we Jews were no worse off than others. And that there was so much to Jewish history beyond a vale of tears.

As a teacher of Jewish texts for half a century at JTS, I celebrate all that is good and right in Jewish history. I celebrate our culture, our literary genius, our joyous holidays. I rejoice in our State of Israel. I visit there often and marvel at its achievements. I am amazed that after many years, before October 7, we appeared to be living in peace with our neighbors in the region.

Alas, this was but a chimera.

I embrace our American Jewish community for its enormous accomplishments, even as I watch our numbers dwindle due to the mixed blessings of assimilation. I thrill to see how American Jews are comfortable in the corridors of power, even as I fret at the fragility of this moment.

I see European Jewry reborn and beginning again to flourish. But I know only too well, the cruelty and degradation my fellow Jews suffered there less than a century ago. That, too, was a literal enslavement from which God redeemed us.

This is my task on this Shabbat Hagadol, the great Sabbath before Passover.

Before we reenact the Exodus at our families' tables worldwide, it behooves us to reflect this Shabbat on how we got here. The last century might have been the worst of all the preceding centuries of Jewish life. And, it might also have been the very best.

We can weep this Passover at the empty seat at our tables, the one where cousin Hersh should be sitting. And at the same time, we can rejoice for the extraordinary number of synagogues and the exceptional number of students learning daily about their Jewish heritage. We taste the salty tear-like water in which we dip the greens during our seder, our eyes water at the sharp bitterness of the horseradish we nibble. And then we praise the soup, the appetizers, the main dishes, and the sweet desserts (deserts?) that we shall enjoy. We wistfully sing an invitation to Elijah to join our seder, and we give lip service to the hope that the Messiah comes in his wake.

I would be thrilled to learn that there could be such a thing as a Messiah who will bring our salvation. But this Passover, I would sing a full Hallel to God, our Savior, if only I could welcome home cousin Hersh. *(Burton L. Visotzky is the Nathan and Janet Appleman Professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies Emeritus at JTS)*

## What Lessons Can we Learn from the Haggadah this Pesah
## by Rabbi Prof. David Golinkin
## https://schechter.edu/what-lessons-can-we-learn-from-the-haggadah-this-pesah/

According to Sefer Hahinukh, it's a positive commandment to rejoice on the three pilgrim festivals, as it is written, "and you shall rejoice in your festivals" (Deut. 16:14). This year, it is difficult to rejoice. Some 1,200 Jews, Arabs and foreign workers were murdered on October 7th, 260 Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza, and 250 innocent people were taken hostage, of whom 134 are still being held prisoner by Hamas.

Even so, I believe there are six important insights which we can learn from the Haggadah about our current situation.

The first is hospitality. At the very beginning of the Seder we declare: "Let all who are hungry, come and eat." This sentence is based on the practice of Rav Huna (Babylon, ca. 250 CE) who declared whenever he broke bread: "Whoever is in need, let him come and eat" (Ta'anit 20b). Since October 7th, we have seen an incredible outpouring of hospitality in the State of Israel. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis have welcomed strangers into their homes, baked and cooked food for huge numbers of soldiers, and brought food and clothing to the 250,000 evacuees from the north and south. This Pesah custom has now become a norm. We hope and pray that it continues.

The second lesson is Jewish Peoplehood. Many commentators have tried to figure out the difference between the Wise and the Wicked Sons. The Wise Son says: "What are the testimonies, the statutes, and the laws which the Lord our God has commanded you?" (Deut. 6:20) – and we praise him. The Wicked Son says: "What is this service to you?" (Exodus 12:26) – and we condemn him. However, in the Septuagint, an early midrash (Mekhilta Bo 18, p. 73), the Talmud Yerushalmi (Pesahim 10:4, fol. 37d), the Vulgate, many Haggadah manuscripts and the Prague Haggadah of 1526 the verse in Deuteronomy says "has commanded otanu – us," and not etkhem — you. In other words, the Wise Son is wise because he views himself as part of us, Klal Yisrael, the collective Jewish people, while the Wicked Son "excluded himself from the community."

Since the October War began, millions of Jews have stood up for and defended the State of Israel — from 300,000 people at the rally in Washington to sending planeloads of equipment to Israel to raising over 700 million dollars for Israel Emergency campaigns. They are the Wise Son.

On the other hand, some ignorant and misguided Jews such as "Jewish Voice for Peace" and the director Jonathan Glazer have said lakhem, to you, and read themselves out of the Jewish collective. We must teach and convince Jews of all ages that they are part of us, so that they will all emulate the Wise Son.

The third lesson is Resilience. One of the most famous passages in the Haggadah is V'hee she'amda, which has become immensely popular thanks to a beautiful tune composed by Yonatan Razel in 2008.

The Haggadah passage begins: "Blessed be He who keeps His promise to the Jewish people" (Genesis 15:13-14), that Abraham's offspring shall be oppressed in Egypt for 400 years, "and in the end they shall go free with great wealth." It continues: V'hee she'amda, "And this promise has stood for our ancestors and for us, for not only one enemy has risen against us to annihilate us, but in every generation, there are those who rise against us to annihilate us, but the Holy One blessed be He, saves us from their hand."

The Haggadah Yisraelit, edited by Mishael and Noam Zion, proceeds to list 57 wars, pogroms and attacks against the Jews from slavery in Egypt to the Destruction of both Temples to medieval expulsions to Chmelnitzki to the Holocaust to October 7th. But why? Why have other peoples and religions been trying to kill us for 3,400 years? What have we done to deserve this perpetual chain of antisemitism which has resurfaced with a vengeance since October 7th?

On the one hand, we can take the passage literally. Despite all of these attempts, God has always saved us and we have outlived all of our persecutors from the

ancient Egyptians to the Babylonians to the Romans to the Cossacks to the Nazis — and so will we outlive Hamas.

On the other hand, we can view this as the secret of Jewish resilience. As Meir Ariel sang in his popular song: "We survived Pharaoh, we will survive this too!" Precisely because our enemies are constantly trying to destroy us for no reason, we will survive and thrive and flourish!

The fourth lesson is that vengeance comes from God. After Birkat Hamazon (The Grace After Meals) and before the second half of Hallel, we open the door and recite a series of four verses:

"Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not know You, upon the kingdoms which have not called upon Your name. For they have devoured Jacob and desolated his home (Psalms 79:6-7). Pour out Your wrath on them; may your blazing anger overtake them (Psalms 69:25). Pursue them with anger and destroy them from under the heavens of the of the Lord (Lamentations 3:66)."

These verses do not appear in early Haggadot. They are first mentioned in France and Germany in the 12th century and slowly but surely spread throughout the Jewish world and the number of verses varied. Some medieval rabbis attempted to explain these verses, but it's not at all clear why we recite them or why specifically at this point in the Seder.

Many have suggested that these verses were added as a reaction to Blood Libels, which frequently occurred on Pesah. Beginning in 1144, Christians accused Jews of using the blood of Christian babies to bake matzot, which is, of course, utterly absurd. The Jews of France and Germany therefore asked God to "Pour out Your wrath" on those who persecute us.

Since October 7th, a small number of Israelis have said that we should kill all of the Hamas terrorists as an act of vengeance. However, as I have shown elsewhere (Responsa in a Moment, Vol. 3, pp. 215-217), the word nakam or nekama appears 44 times in the Bible. Only three verses talk about human vengeance; in most cases, the Bible talks about vengeance that was taken or will be taken by God, not by human beings.

We are not fighting in Gaza as an act of vengeance. We are fighting there to free the hostages ands to make sure that Hamas will never again repeat the bestial acts which it performed on October 7th.

That is why these verses say: "Pour out Your wrath" — God's wrath, not ours.

The fifth lesson has to do with our attitude towards Redemption. In the Talmud, Rabbi Yehoshua says: "In Nisan they were redeemed, in Nisan they will be

redeemed" (Rosh Hashanah 11b). This is one of the reasons that the Seder begins with the Aramaic sentence: "This year here, next year in Eretz Yisrael" and ends with the words "Next year in Jerusalem!" In The Schechter Haggadah, I included next to the latter sentence an illustration from the famous Birds' Head Haggadah written in Germany ca. 1300. Four men are pointing up at a walled city hanging over their heads which is labeled Yerushalayim, Jerusalem. This is based on midrashim which say that there is a Yerushalayim shel ma'alah, a Heavenly Jerusalem, which will descend to earth when the Messiah comes. One of the things we have learned from Herzl and Jabotinsky, Ben-Gurion and Begin, Rabbi Kuk and Rabbi Goren is that we can no longer afford to wait for the Messiah and the Heavenly Jerusalem. With faith in God who gave us the Land of Israel some 3,800 years ago, we must continue to build the earthly Jerusalem and to defend the State of Israel from all those who wish to destroy it.

The final lesson is that we must remember the 134 hostages in the midst of our joy. The central midrash of the Haggadah includes the verse: "And we cried to the Lord, God of our ancestors, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction… and our oppression" (Deut. 26:7). As we read this verse this year, we will be crying out to God to hear our voice and to see the affliction and the oppression of the hostages. The Midrash continues: "The Lord heard our voice", as it is said (Exodus 2:24): "and God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." We hope and pray that God will hear the groaning of the hostages and, to paraphrase the Haggadah, "May He bring them forth from slavery into freedom, from sorrow into joy, from mourning into festivity, from darkness into great light, and from servitude into redemption." Ken yehi ratzon! So may it be God's will. (*David Golinkin is President of The Schechter Institutes, Inc. and President Emeritus of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies. For twenty years he served as Chair of the Va'ad Halakhah (Law Committee) of the Rabbinical Assembly which gives halakhic guidance to the Masorti Movement in Israel. He is the founder and director of the Institute of Applied Halakhah at Schechter and also directs the Center for Women in Jewish Law. Rabbi Professor Golinkin made aliyah in 1972, earning a BA in Jewish History and two teaching certificates from The Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He received an MA in Rabbinics and a PhD in Talmud from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America where he was also ordained as Rabbi. )*

## Yahrtzeits

Mattye Gandel remembers her father H. Jay Messeloff on Monday April 22
Amy Cooper remembers her husband David Cooper on Wednesday April 24
Rebecca Cooper remembers her father David Cooper on Wednesday April 24
Bart Klein remembers his mother Judith Z. Klein on Thursday April 25